

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1988

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 24 2023

RE: GOV. MSG. NOS. 583,  
584, 585, 586, 587

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2023  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred Governor's Message Nos. 583, 584, 585, 586, and 587, submitting for study and consideration the nominations of:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| G.M. No. 583 | JASON OKUHAMA,<br>for a term to expire 06-30-2023;    |
| G.M. No. 584 | JASON OKUHAMA,<br>for a term to expire 06-30-2027;    |
| G.M. No. 585 | JAYSON WATTS,<br>for a term to expire 06-30-2025;     |
| G.M. No. 586 | KAREN SEDDON,<br>for a term to expire 06-30-2023; and |
| G.M. No. 587 | KAREN SEDDON,<br>for a term to expire 06-30-2027,     |

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee reviewed the personal histories, resumes, and statements submitted by Jason Okuhama, Jayson Watts, and Karen Seddon for service on the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.



JASON OKUHAMA

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nominations for the appointment and reappointment of Jason Okuhama from the Agribusiness Development Corporation; Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development; Oahu Agriculture and Conservation Association Ag Finance Hui; Feed the Hunger Fund; Hawai'i Investment Ready; Farm Link Hawaii; Ulupono Initiative; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Larry Jefts Farms, LLC; and two individuals.

Your Committee finds that Jason Okuhama has an extensive banking background and experience working for the State, and has been a managing partner at Hawai'i Lending Specialists, LLC, since 2000. Mr. Okuhama previously worked as a business loan officer at Bank of America and the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, and has worked as a Mortgage Loan Officer at the International Savings and Loan Association and as an Assistant Branch Manager at First Hawai'i Bank. Your Committee additionally finds that Mr. Okuhama has the experience and expertise needed by the Agribusiness Development Corporation to seek out commercial, federal, and state funding for projects that are important to Hawaii's agricultural industry. Over his career, Mr. Okuhama has secured tens of millions of dollars in financing for large and small food producing operations in the State. As the State seeks to increase local food independence and security, your Committee believes Jason Okuhama has the background necessary to facilitate and support this arduous economic and agricultural transition as a member of the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation and therefore recommends that he be appointed and reappointed to the Board.

JAYSON WATTS

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the appointment of Jayson Watts from the Agribusiness Development Corporation; Office of the Mayor of the County of Kaua'i; one member of the Honolulu City Council; Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.; Hawai'i Public Health Institute; Hawaii Food Industry Association; Ulupono Initiative; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; SanHi Government Strategies; Larry Jefts Farms, LLC; and twenty-three individuals.



Your Committee finds that Jayson Watts is currently the Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives at Mahi Pono, LLC, a farming company on Maui that is working to transform forty-one thousand acres of vacant former sugar cane land into a thriving hub of diversified agriculture. Mr. Watts has also served the State for twenty years through his work in various roles, including as Special Assistant to the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations, Senior Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor, Assistant Senate Sergeant-at-Arms, Legislative Director of the Office of the Senate Majority Caucus Leader, and as an Intern and Staff Assistant at the Office of Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink. Your Committee further finds that Mr. Watts has hands-on experience in the local agricultural industry and serves on multiple boards, including the Maui County Farm Bureau and Hawai'i Food Industry Association. Your Committee asserts that Jayson Watts' knowledge and familiarity with local agriculture will improve the function and capability of the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, and therefore recommends that he be appointed to the Board.

#### KAREN SEDDON

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nominations for the appointment and reappointment of Karen Seddon from the Agribusiness Development Corporation; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Larry Jefts Farms, LLC; and four individuals.

Your Committee finds that Karen Seddon's professional background in planning, designing, financing, and constructing various community development projects will provide crucial expertise to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation. Ms. Seddon is the Regional Vice President of EAH Housing where she takes primary leadership over all affordable housing development activity in the Hawaii region. She previously worked as Regional Vice President of the Michaels Organization, Executive Director of the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation, Director of Land development at DR Horton - Hawaii, and Development Manager at Kapalua Land Company. She is also a member of Lambda Alpha International, which provides a forum for the exchange of ideas in the fast-paced world of land use and development, and the Urban Land Institute, which provides leadership in the responsible use of land. Ms. Seddon's extensive development background and experience will prove to be invaluable as the Agribusiness Development Corporation continues to partner with farmers, ranchers, and aquaculture groups to optimize the use



of selected high-value lands, water systems, and infrastructure for commercial agricultural use for the economic, environmental, and social benefit of the people of Hawaii. Your Committee therefore recommends that Karen Seddon be appointed and reappointed to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture and Environment that are attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominees, has found the nominees to be qualified for the positions to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nominations.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Agriculture and  
Environment,



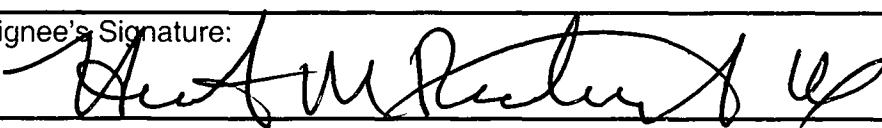
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MIKE GABBARD, Chair



The Senate  
 Thirty-Second Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Agriculture and Environment**  
**AEN**  
**Advise and Consent**

Governor's Message No.:* <b>GM 583</b>	Committee Referral: <b>AEN</b>	Date: <b>04-05-23</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its decision				
The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advise and Consent 2340 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Advise and Consent 2345				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	<b>X</b>			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	<b>X</b>			
DECOITE, Lynn	<b>X</b>			
RHOADS, Karl	<b>X</b>			
AWA, Brenton				<b>X</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>			<b>1</b>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original                      Yellow                      Pink                      Goldenrod File with Committee Report                      Clerk's Office                      Drafting Agency                      Committee File Copy				

\*Only one Governor's Message per Record of Votes

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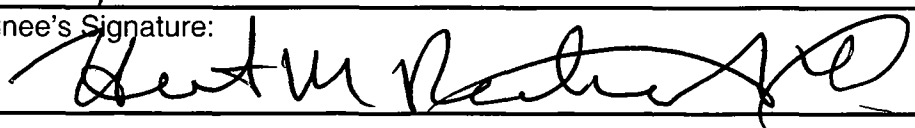
**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Agriculture and Environment**  
**AEN**  
**Advise and Consent**

Governor's Message No.:* <b>GM 584</b>	Committee Referral: <b>AEN</b>	Date: <b>04-05-23</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its decision				
The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advise and Consent 2340 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Advise and Consent 2345				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	<del>X</del>			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	<del>X</del>			
DECOITE, Lynn	<del>X</del>			
RHOADS, Karl	<del>X</del>			
AWA, Brenton	<del>X</del>			<del>1</del> <i>W</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>			
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original      Yellow      Pink      Goldenrod File with Committee Report      Clerk's Office      Drafting Agency      Committee File Copy				

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**Committee on Agriculture and Environment**  
**AEN**  
**Advise and Consent**

Governor's Message No.:* <b>GM 585</b>	Committee Referral: <b>AEN</b>	Date: <b>04-05-23</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its decision				
The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advise and Consent 2340 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Advise and Consent 2345				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	X			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	X			
DECOITE, Lynn	X			
RHOADS, Karl	X			
AWA, Brenton	X			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>			
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
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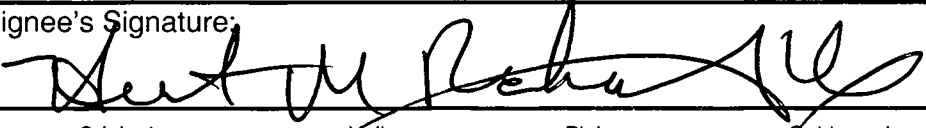
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The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advise and Consent 2340 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Advise and Consent 2345				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	<del>X</del>			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	<del>X</del>			
DECOITE, Lynn	<del>X</del>			
RHOADS, Karl	<del>X</del>			
AWA, Brenton	<del>X</del>			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>			
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RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	<del>X</del>			
DECOITE, Lynn	<del>X</del>			
RHOADS, Karl	<del>X</del>			
AWA, Brenton	<del>X</del>			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>			
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
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